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Attorney's Docket No. 46955.20

Patent

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of: Rainer Hillenbrand, et al. :
Serial No.: Not Yet Assigned : Group No. : Not Yet Assigned
Filed: herewith : Examiner: Not Yet Assigned

For: Methods and Devices for Acquiring Optical Near-Field Interaction Signals

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Mail Stop PCT
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Prior to Examination on the merits, please amend the application as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace claims 1 to 13, 15 and 17 to 33 as follows.

Please add claims 34 to 36 as follows.

1.(Currently Amended) A method for acquiring optical near-field interaction signals in the infrared spectral region, comprising the steps of:

illumination of an object combination comprising at least two objects (~~1-7~~) with infrared radiation so that an infrared near-field coupling is generated between the objects (~~1-7~~); and

acquisition the scattered light which is scattered by the object combination, which scattered light comprises a fraction (s) that has been modified as a result of the near-field coupling, wherein

at least one of the objects (~~1-7~~) comprises a polar material which at least in part comprises a polar solid-state structure; and